

## **Report of the Deputy Chief Fire Officer**

### **14. Update from the Health and Safety Committee**

#### **Purpose of report**

1. To provide the Policy and Resources Committee with an update on the activities and items of significance from the Service's Health and Safety Committee.

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#### **Recommendation**

***It is recommended that the following activities and items of significance from Quarter 4 2015-16 be noted:***

- i) a total of 29 Health and Safety events were reported, a decrease in comparison to the previous quarter where 38 events were reported;***
- ii) the Health & Safety Committee is exploring a number of opportunities to share best practice and to collaboratively develop health and safety policies and procedures with other fire and rescue services; and***
- iii) the Health & Safety department is undertaking a review of the health and safety management systems with regards to the Service's fleet.***

#### **Introduction**

2. The Health and Safety Committee (the Committee) is established to provide effective arrangements for the liaison and review of all matters in regards to Health and Safety (H&S). The Committee acts as a forum for liaison on all matters relating to H&S for key stakeholders and departments and provides an opportunity for stakeholders to discuss any H&S matter, which includes consultation with the workforce via the employee representatives that are on the Committee. The Committee is also supported by an Authority Member, Cllr Gordon Yarranton.
3. The Committee has the facility to task work to the Health & Safety Working Group, with specific pieces of H&S related work which require dedicated resources and input. The group meets as and when required but at least every six months.

#### **Quarterly Performance**

4. The Committee last met on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 and is due to meet next on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016. A review of quarterly performance for the relevant period was discussed in detail, which did not highlight any particular area of concern. The report is included at Appendix 1.

## **Collaborative Opportunities**

5. The group are exploring a number of opportunities to share best practice and to collaboratively produce generic FRS H&S policies and procedures. This is linked to the Regional Operations Committee and the work they are undertaking with the National Operational Guidance Programme in delivering regional policies and procedures.

## **Review of Health & Safety Management Systems**

6. The H&S department is undertaking a review of the H&S management systems at Operational Logistics with the initial focus on the fleet area of business. An action plan will be produced highlighting any potential areas for improvement, with implementation being supported by the H&S Advisor.

## **Chief Fire Officers Association (CFOA) – West Midlands Region Audit**

7. To complete the remaining outstanding recommendations of the CFOA West Midlands Region H&S Audit, a Risk Assessment database has been created and trialled at a number of locations across the Service. Further analysis and testing of the system is being undertaken. Generally the feedback has been positive and with a few minor amendments, a plan and timescales for delivery can be developed. The H&S Committee will monitor the recommendations to completion.

## **Fleet Related Incidents**

8. There have been two fleet related reports received which were responded to. The first item was a significant crack of a trailer connection to a Service vehicle. In this case it related to a water rescue van with a towed boat. The second fleet related incident was as a result of an event that occurred in Merseyside FRS and was reported through the CFOA H&S Safety Bulletin. All the relevant HWFRS fleet types were precautionary inspected and no defects were found.

## **Organisational Road Risk**

9. The H&S Working Group was tasked with reviewing all aspects of organisational road risk, with a focus on operational road risk. Whilst HWFRS has a relatively good track record and low levels of serious accidents, there have in recent years been a number of FRSs who have undergone legal scrutiny following collisions. There have also been a number of FRSs who have implemented different approaches and ways of working in relation to operational road risk that may be worthy of further investigation and consideration.

## **Conclusion**

10. In general terms there appears to be no significant issues of concern and the level of reporting indicates a strong H&S culture with a low level of serious accidents. The tasking of the H&S Working Group shows a proactive approach to developing and improving an area of inherent risk that reports locally and nationally.

11. This report provides Members with an update on health and safety issues discussed at the previous Health and Safety Committee of which further detail and other matters can be found in Appendix 1.

### Corporate Considerations

<b>Resource Implications</b> (identify any financial, legal, property or human resources issues)	N/A this report is for noting and does not propose any new policies
<b>Strategic Policy Links</b> (identify how proposals link in with current priorities and policy framework and if they do not, identify any potential implications).	Corporate strategy – Ensuring firefighter safety
<b>Risk Management / Health &amp; Safety</b> (identify any risks, the proposed control measures and risk evaluation scores).	Reduces the overall impact for health and safety management in the areas identified and safeguards the Service's legal requirements
<b>Consultation</b> (identify any public or other consultation that has been carried out on this matter)	N/A - this report is for noting and does not propose any new policies
<b>Equalities</b> (has an Equalities Impact Assessment been completed? If not, why not?)	N/A – this report is for noting and does not propose any new policies

### Supporting Information

Appendix 1: Quarter 4 of year 2015/2016 (January – March 2016) Health & Safety Performance Report

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## **Overview of Events Reported During Quarter 4 (Jan 16 – Mar 16)**

### **Summary**

In the period of January 2016 to March 2016 a total of **29** Health and Safety (H&S) events were reported. They fell into the categories of:

- Personal Injury
- Vehicle Accidents
- Property or Equipment
- Near Hits or Causes for Concern.

During this period there were no events reported in the following categories:

- Exposure and Violence or Aggression

Individual summaries of reporting in the key areas are outlined below.

### **Personal Injury**

Of the **29** H&S events reported, **10** were related to the category of Personal Injury. These are described in Table 1 below:

<b>Sub-Categories</b>	<b>Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category</b>
5 incidents relate to accidents/injuries occurring during training.	1 relates to a lower back injury during road traffic collision (RTC) training exercise.
	1 relates to a twisted ankle while running across the training ground, there were no external factors involved. <b>3 Days lost</b>
	1 relates to an injury to the knee caused by a ejected blank cap from an American style pillar fire hydrant
	1 relates to a neck injury sustained during an RTC exercise
	1 relates to an ankle injury sustained while hose running on uneven ground.
1 incident relates to a non-work accident/injury	1 relates to an operational employee (On Call) falling over on an uneven road surface getting to his car to respond, following activation of his alerter.
2 accident/injuries were at operational incidents	1 relates to a hand injury caused by a third party shutting a door on someone's hand.
	1 relates to a fall into an uncovered man hole in garden of property.
	1 relates to a bump to the head while investigating a narrow loft space (helmet had been removed to gain better access into loft space).
1 incident was due to routine chronic action.	1 relates to bursitis to elbow caused by prolonged computer use during a limited period.
	Totalling <b>10</b> personal injuries
	Totalling <b>0</b> RIDDOR events
	Totalling <b>3</b> days lost

*Table 1: Personal Injuries Reported during Quarter 4*

## Vehicle Accidents

Of the **29** H&S events **11** were related to the category of Vehicle Accidents - these are further described in Table 2 below. Only 7 of these events could be attributed to the FRS driver and the events in grey are highlighted as not being the fault of the FRS driver:

Sub-Categories	Breakdown of Injuries in Each Sub-Category
7 accidents were during routine activities	1 relates to Service car reversed into dry riser inlet of drill tower.
	1 relates to Service car struck by third party whilst manoeuvring into car parking space.
	1 relates to a Service car being hit by third party.
	1 relates to a Service car being struck from behind by a third party
	1 relates to a fire engine striking a private wall whilst manoeuvring. This was not during an operational response
	1 relates to a Service van being driven through flood water and stopping three quarters of the way through the distance.
	1 relates to a fire engine being reversed in the appliance bay with the ladder making contact with a partially open bay door. This was not part of an operational response.
1 accident was non service related	1 relates to a Service car sustaining damage whilst in the care of a specialist cleaning contractor.
3 accidents were responding to incidents	1 relates to a fire engine striking a hedgerow, during an operational response
	1 relates to a fire engine wing mirror striking a temporary road sign on the hard shoulder of the motorway
	1 relates to a fire engine losing control and striking a tree and a third party vehicle during an operational response <b>*Significant event</b>
	Totalling <b>11</b> vehicle accidents

Table 2: Vehicle Accidents Reported during Quarter 4

## **Property or Equipment Damage**

Of the **29** H&S events **1** was related to the category of Damage to Property or Equipment, this is further described in Table 3 below:

<b>Sub-Categories</b>	<b>Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category</b>
1 was damage to property	1 relates to a third party driving into a perimeter wall of station grounds.
	Totalling <b>1</b> property or equipment damage

*Table 3: Damage to Property or Equipment Reported during Quarter 4*

## **Near Hits or Causes for Concern**

Of the **29** H&S events **7** were related to the category of Near Hits or Causes for Concern - these are further described in Table 4 below:

<b>Sub-Categories</b>	<b>Break-down of Injuries in Each Sub-Category</b>
1 was whilst responding to an incident	1 relates to charging lead separating from the connector exposing live wires.
2 were at operational incidents	1 relates to reverse running procedure between Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS), Central Motorways Policing Group (CMPG) and the Highways Agency.
	1 relates to a public car driven over hose ramps at high speed (approx. 60mph). Personnel were also in close proximity. Warning lights, signs and personal protective equipment (PPE) were displayed and in use.
3 were during routine activities	1 relates to a television aerial mounting protruding at head height on new accommodation building.
	1 relates to a piece of heavy operational RTC equipment falling out of an appliance locker onto the floor.
	1 relates to a member of staff receiving a minor shock from a portable heater.
1 was during a training exercise	1 relates to a third party from a partner agency becoming submerged in water during a water rescue exercise <b>*Significant event</b>
	Totalling <b>7</b> near hits or causes for concern

*Table 4: Near Hits or Causes for Concern Reported during Quarter 4*

## **Significant/Serious Events during Quarter 4 (Jan 16 – Mar 16)**

- 1.1 A total of two serious events were reported in Quarter 4 of the year 2015-16. One was reported in February and relates to the West Midlands Ambulance Service's (WMAS) employee who had a near miss during a water training exercise at Symonds Yat. The employee was a member of a Hazardous Area Rescue Team (HART) that were training with a Hereford and Worcester Water Rescue Team. The other incident relates to a serious RTC with an appliance responding to a fire call reported in March. The previous Quarter, Q3 (Oct 15-Dec 15), had only one serious incident reported, as did Quarter 4 of the financial year 2014-15.
- 1.2 The first significant event reported during the reporting period relates to an incident where a member of the HART team was uncontrollably submerged during joint water rescue training. A joint investigation is being undertaken.
- 1.3 The second event involved a fire engine colliding with a tree and third party public car whilst responding to an incident. An investigation is currently being conducted and evaluated by the Crown Prosecution Service.

## **Summary for Quarter 4 (Jan 16 – Mar 16)**

- 2.1 No RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations) reports were submitted to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).
- 2.2 In comparison to the previous quarter, the total number of reported personal injuries and vehicle accidents has slightly decreased.